

What may be Missing in My Life, Part 1 - Acts 19:1-7 - February 8th, 2009

- These first 7 verses represent a most interesting account of what Paul experiences, and who he meets, upon his arrival in Ephesus.
- By some accounts, these first seven verses are actually quite controversial, and have been the subject of much debate in Christendom.

- It's for this reason that I sense the Lord would have us take a closer look at this passage. There are many riches to mine from the text.
- I believe that the text we have before us have profound application to us in how we live our lives in the world in these last days.

- Here's why I believe that; "there was something about these Ephesian disciples that prompted Paul to ask them about the Holy Spirit."
- This is out of character for Paul to do this. It seems he discerned that there was something missing in their Christian experience.
- Perhaps there are some, or even many, here today, who may be like these Ephesians, in that it just seems that something is missing.

- This is part one of a study titled; "What may be Missing in My Life," and in this series, we'll be looking at the "baptism of the Holy Spirit."
- My hope is that this will be life changing for those who may not have an understanding of how the Holy Spirit works in a believer's life.

"In my sober judgment the relation of the Spirit to the believer is the most vital question the church faces today."

A.W. Tozer "Keys to the Deeper Life," p. 15.

- I found three conditions with these 12 Ephesians that caused Paul to notice the lack in their Christian lives and do what he did about it.
- Condition 1: I don't have the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Verses 1-2),
- Condition 2: I don't have an understanding of the Holy Spirit (Verses 3-4)
- Condition 3: I don't have the gifts of the Holy Spirit (Verses 5-7)

1. I don't have the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Verses 1-2)

1 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples 2 and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

v1 We left Apollos in Corinth, and rejoin Paul who, begins his 3rd missionary journey, arriving at Ephesus where he finds some disciples.

v2 Paul asks them if they received the Holy Spirit since they believed. They tell him no, and that they never heard there is a Holy Spirit.

"There are even now professing Christians who know nothing of the Holy Ghost, ...What do we, each one of us, personally know of the Holy Spirit?... "Have ye then received the Spirit since you believed? Beloved, are you now receiving the Spirit? Are you living under his divine influence? Are you filled with his power? Put the question personally. I am afraid some professors will have to admit that they hardly know whether there be any Holy Ghost; and others will have to confess that though they have enjoyed a little of his saving work, yet they do not know much of his ennobling and sanctifying influence."

Charles Spurgeon

- I suppose this may be the question before each and every one of us; "What do we know of, and have we received, the Holy Spirit?"
- Perhaps your answer may be; "yes, I received the Holy Spirit when I believed." That's true, but notice what Paul's question is...
- He asks; "have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" implying that they weren't baptized with the Spirit when they believed.

"Now there are those who object strenuously to that translation, and the Revised Version of the Bible demonstrates their objection. For the Revised Version translates this, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit *when* you believed?" The question, "Have you received the Holy Spirit *since* you believed?" would indicate a separate subsequent work of grace beyond initial saving faith. And because Baptist's doctrine declares that you receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit upon conversion and deny any further work of grace subsequent to conversion, the question, "Have you received the Holy Spirit *since* you believed?" would totally dispute that Baptist position. And so they prefer the translation, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit *when* you believed?" However, even that presents difficulty to their position, because it would seem to indicate that a person could believe without receiving. Otherwise, why would Paul ask it? The very question itself would indicate that it was possible to be a believer and not have received that fullness of the Spirit."

Pastor Chuck Smith, Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa

2. I don't have an understanding of the Holy Spirit (Verses 3-4)

3 So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied. 4 Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus."

v3 Paul asks them what baptism did they receive, and they answer him by telling him that it was John's baptism.

v4 He tells them that John's was a baptism of repentance, because John told the people to believe in Jesus, the one coming after him.

- Some commentators suggest that, because of these verses, these disciples weren't yet believers, which is why they didn't understand.

One commentator said it this way; "The problem in this is that they are called *disciples*, which almost always refers to Christians, genuine followers of Jesus Christ."

"When the men are called *disciples* without further qualification, that . . . seems to mean that they were disciples of Jesus. Had Luke meant to indicate that they were disciples of John the Baptist . . . he would have said so explicitly."

F.F. Bruce

- While these Ephesian disciples were already believers, they, like Apollos, only had a limited understanding of Jesus and Spirit baptism.
- They also had a limited understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer when one is baptized in the Holy Spirit.
- I submit to you that when we are limited in our understanding of God and His Word, we will be lacking in our Christian experience.

3. I don't have the gifts of the Spirit (Verses 5-7)

5 On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came **on** them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. 7 There were about twelve men in all.

v5 Whey they hear this, we're told that they were then baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

v6-7 Paul lays hands on them, and the Holy Spirit comes "upon" them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were 12 men.

- This is where it might get a little gnarly for some, especially for those who may come from different church backgrounds.